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**THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE UJNR
PANEL ON FIRE RESEARCH AND SAFETY,
MARCH 13-20, 1996**

VOLUME 1

Kellie Ann Beall, Editor



**United States Department of Commerce
Technology Administration
National Institute of Standards and Technology**

OPENING REMARKS

Dr. Richard N. Wright
Building and Fire Research Laboratory

Dr. Mimura, Dr. Snell, it gives me great pleasure to welcome the Thirteenth Joint Meeting of the UJNR Panel on Fire Research and Safety. Our increasing urbanization and growing fire losses show that your work is of increasing importance to our nations and the world. The tragic fires following the Hyogo ken Nanbu earthquake on January 17, 1995 specifically illustrate the need for your work.

Your program describes advances in fire science and fire safety engineering that confirm that resolute efforts in research and development and implementation of fire safety practices can address our two nations' needs for risk reduction.

Among my responsibilities are to chair the U.S.-side of the UJNR Panel on Wind and Seismic Effects and to represent NIST in the U.S. National Earthquake Risk Reduction Program. We are planning in further collaborations with Japan that will involve the UJNR Fire Research and Safety and Wind and Seismic Effects Panels. We are working with the Japanese Science and Technology agency to formulate a U.S.-Japan Earthquake R&D Initiative tentatively entitled "Mitigating Urban Earthquake Disasters." A major component would be mitigation and control of post-earthquake fires. The expertise and collaborations of this Panel on Fire Research and Safety should provide strong bases for enhanced collaborations.

As a result of the agreement of our President and Japan's Prime Minister last June, we jointly are planning Earthquake Policy Symposia for the U.S. in September 1996 and Japan in May or June 1997. We expect that the inputs of our panels to these symposia will inform our policy makers of opportunities to substantially reduce U.S. and Japanese vulnerability to conflagrations following earthquakes.

We have benefitted from the many accomplishments of the UJNR Panel on Fire Research and Safety in its twenty-some years of effective collaborations. We are gratified that our Japanese and U.S. colleagues have endured the inconvenience of the postponement of this important meeting and are ready to continue and strengthen our joint efforts to reduce human and economic fire losses. Best wishes for a fruitful meeting.